

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00
DLOS-09 OES-07 OPR-02 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /072 W
-----110308Z 113002 /14

R 101119Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 488
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GR
SUBJECT: LONGSHOREMEN END WORK SLOWDOWN AT PIRAEUS

REFS: (A) ATHENS 2124 (NOTAL) (B) ATHENS 3266

1. ON MAY 7, LONGSHOREMEN AT THE PORT OF PIRAEUS AGREED TO
TERMINATE THEIR WORK SLOWDOWN WHICH HAS CONGESTED THE HARBOR
SINCE FEBRUARY 6 IN RETURN FOR A TWO-STEP 15 PERCENT WAGE
INCREASE AND SOME INCREASES IN FRINGE BENEFITS. THE LONG-
SHOREMEN RETURNED TO A FULL WORK SCHEDULE ON MAY 9.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE SETTLEMENT CAME AFTER A
SPECIAL MEDIATION EFFORT BY MINISTER OF MERCHANT MARINE
PAPADONGONAS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE LONGSHOREMEN'S
FEDERATION, BABIS LEFThERIOTIS. THE PIRAEUS LONGSHOREMEN'S
UNION HAD ORIGINALLY DEMANDED INCREASES IN WAGES AND FRINGE
BENEFITS AMOUNTING TO APPROXIMATELY 30 PERCENT. THEY HAD
BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR DEMANDS OVER A LONG PERIOD
BY REFUSING TO WORK OVERTIME AND BY WORKING DURING
REGULAR HOURS ONLY AT OFFICIAL RATES OF SPEED SET FAR
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BELOW THEIR ACTUAL CAPACITY TO MOVE CARGO. THEY CONTINUED
TO RECEIVE THEIR BASIC SALARIES, WHILE THE PIRAEUS PORT
AUTHORITY HAD NO LEGAL GROUNDS TO SEEK A SETTLEMENT THROUGH
COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

3. COMMENT: THE TWO-STEP 15 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE (10
PERCENT EFFECTIVE MAY 1 AND 5 PERCENT EFFECTIVE JULY 1)

IS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-INFLATIONARY GUIDELINES.
IT CONSTITUTES A MAJOR SUCCESS IN THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN
TO HOLD DOWN WAGE AND PRICE INCREASES. THE LABOR MINISTRY'S
SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD THE EMBASSY'S LABOR OFFICER TWO
WEEKS AGO THAT THE LONGSHOREMEN'S WAGE DISPUTE WAS THE
MOST SERIOUS AMONG SEVERAL, CURRENTLY UNDER ARBITRATION
OR NEGOTIATION, FACED BY THE GOVERNMENT.
KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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